

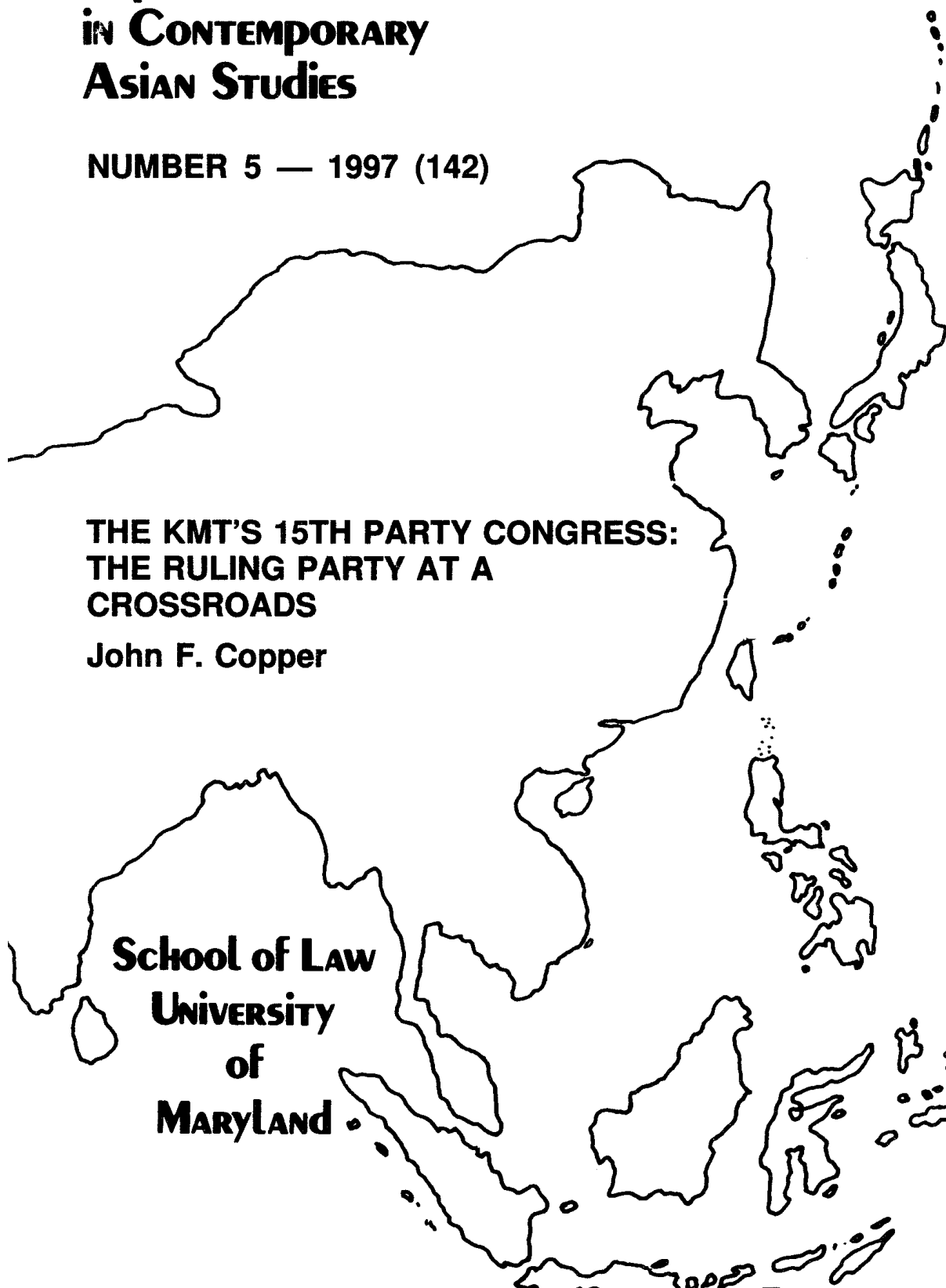
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**THE KMT'S 15TH PARTY CONGRESS:  
THE RULING PARTY AT A  
CROSSROADS**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

For four days from August 25 to 29, 1997, the ruling Nationalist Party or Kuomintang (KMT) in Taiwan (officially known as the Republic of China) held its 15th Congress. The meeting's venue was the International Convention Center adjacent to the Hyatt Hotel in Taipei; attendees were party delegates, other party members, dignitaries, visitors and observers. The mood of the meeting was somber. There was a distinct feeling among party leaders and delegates to the congress alike that the 103-year-old party faced serious problems and challenges.

Four years had passed since the KMT's 14th Congress and nine years since the 13th, both of which witnessed sweeping changes in the make-up of the party, party rules and procedures and the direction of reform in the party.<sup>1</sup> Both meetings were replete with controversy and came at critical junctures in terms of ROC politics and the role of the ruling party in that context. This meeting was similar

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1. For details on these two congresses, see John F. Copper, "The KMT's 13th Party Congress: Reform, Democratization, New Blood," in Cynthia Chenault (ed.), *Modernizing East Asia: Economic and Cultural Dimensions of Political Change* (New York: St. Johns University Press, 1989) and John F. Copper, "The KMT's 14th Party Congress: Toward Unity or Disunity?" *American Journal of Chinese Studies*, October 1994, pp. 59—83.

in many respects to those two previous congresses. However, in some ways it was very different: there was no leadership struggle at the top nor was there a problem of open factionalism. However, the mood at this meeting was one of apprehension, reflecting the widely-held perception that the KMT's future was in doubt and that the ruling party was truly at a crossroads.

The Congress convened on the heels of three major elections, controversy over amending the Constitution and new alignments of Taiwan's political parties. The meeting also took place in the midst of an inter-party dispute that centered on the downsizing of the provincial government and pitted the provincial governor James Soong against President Lee Teng-hui. A pending reshuffling of cabinet posts, the resignation of the premier and a new appointment to that office were on the minds of KMT leaders as well as delegates to the Congress in August. The issues of crime and political corruption weighed heavily on the ruling party which, to the public, bore responsibility for them. These problems were seen as sorely hurting the KMT's public image and its hopes for performing well in Fall local elections.

The congress accomplished the ratification of new policies and the Congress energized the party at a time when the party needed it. Congress also healed some wounds, though it also created new ones. In an effort to avoid controversial personnel changes, the party succeeded in installing a new, albeit not radically changed, second-echelon leadership. President Lee was reelected chairman of the KMT by a wider margin than at the previous congress. Governor James Soong, when the vote was taken for Central Committee membership, won the largest number of delegate votes, which did not please President Lee. Their feud created a field day for the media.

In the pages below, the author will assess relevant precursory events to the Congress that put into context the KMT's 15th Party Congress. Clearly it was convened at an eventful time for Taiwan politically. Also analyzed are the immediate problems the KMT faced at the time as well as changes in personnel, party policies and reform. Finally, comments will be made about the significance of the party gathering on the future of the KMT.

## **II. THE POLITICAL SITUATION PRIOR TO THE CONGRESS**

To comprehend what transpired at the KMT's 15th Party Congress, it is necessary to examine events at least three years prior to

the congress, especially the mid-1990s elections. In addition, it is productive to look at political trends in Taiwan together with specific problems that plagued the KMT during the months before the Congress. The issues that the ruling party faced at this time were generally not new and even those that were had a history, but they were in many ways more acute.

In 1994, the Republic of China held elections for the provincial governor (for the first time in history), the two metropolitan city mayors (the offices having been made appointed positions in 1964 and 1977, respectively), and the provincial assembly and the metropolitan city councils.<sup>2</sup> Former KMT Secretary-General, James Soong, a Lee confidant, who had recently been appointed provincial governor, handily won the governors race for the Nationalist Party with 52 percent of the popular vote. The KMT, in addition, did unexpectedly well in the Kaohsiung mayoral race with party stalwart Wu Den-yih. It lost, however, in the Taipei mayoral race to the opposition Democratic Progressive Party's (DPP) Chen Shui-bian. The KMT also performed poorly in the Taipei city council race.

Soong, an inspiring candidate with a charismatic personality, a reputation for being incorruptible, a man of the people and who enjoyed the support of President Lee Teng-hui, won—notwithstanding the opposition's attempt to use the “ethnic (technically provincial origin) card” against him. Lee, observers said, “owed” Soong a debt of gratitude for his strong, some say daring, support of Lee following the death of President Chiang Ching-kuo in 1988 when Lee became president but was challenged when he sought to assume the chairmanship of the party. In any event, Lee's endorsement of Soong and campaigning for him helped Soong win by a significant margin, though he probably would have been victorious without Lee's help. The election, which was the most “national” of any election ever held in the ROC (in the sense that the political parties had to campaign nationwide) was also well organized by KMT professional campaign workers and not so well handled by the opposition parties.

The election victory catapulted Soong upward in terms of his becoming a future candidate for premier and even president in the year 2000. His subsequent credible, if not stellar, performance in

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2. See John F. Copper, “Taiwan's 1994 Gubernatorial and Mayoral Elections,” *Asian Affairs*, Spring 1995, pp. 97-118.

office added to that perception, as did the fact that he rallied a large coterie of employees of the provincial government behind him.

The election, and Chen Shui-bian's subsequent performance in office, did the same for his career and evoked speculation that he would be the next president in the event that the KMT falters and the DPP shows strength in coming elections. Chen was seen as a dynamic, clever and promising politician. Also Wu Den-yih saw his career potential improve.

On the other hand, both the campaign and the election were fraught with widespread cheating, vote-buying being the most common of problems in this realm. Also, for the first time, a third party—the New Party (NP)—competed in a major election, though only meaningfully in the Taipei mayoral race and the Taipei city council races. Nevertheless, the NP tried and was to a considerable degree successful in portraying itself as a clean party and the others, especially the KMT, as corrupt parties that bought elections. In terms of public perception, political corruption had already become a very serious problem and was a matter that clearly needed government and ruling party attention. Meanwhile, Taiwan's political system had taken another big step forward in terms of democratization, making the corruption problem an even more visible one.

In 1995, the KMT suffered a serious setback in the December Legislative Yuan election. In fact, the ruling party nearly lost its majority in the national lawmaking body of government. As a result of its poor performance, its plurality of seats in the Legislative Yuan, for the first time ever, became razor thin. Thinking of this possibility, coalition governance was discussed by observers and the media going into the election. It indeed became a reality later as the Nationalist Party did not come away from the election with enough seats to pass bills, party discipline being weak and KMT attendance sometimes being lax. Pundits meanwhile attributed the KMT's "defeat" to its steady decline in the context of democratization (necessitated by a need for party competition) and to the ruling party's deteriorating image, which was largely a product of the public's disgust with corruption.

Others attributed the KMT's setback to missile tests conducted by the People's Republic of China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) during the run-up to the voting. It had an immediate and transparent impact on the stock market, land prices, applications for visas to other countries and more. The populace was obviously intimidated and fearful. Some blamed President Lee for this. Lee made a trip to the United States in June to his alma mater, Cornell

University, and though he made a hit in the United States and the trip seemed to help Taipei overcome Beijing's efforts to isolate the ROC diplomatically, many viewed the sojourn as unnecessarily provocative.

The KMT was also hurt, in terms of voters' support, by serious divisions in the party, resulting from several party heavyweights expressing their opposition to President Lee and two (three counting one vice presidential candidate) announcing their candidacies for the presidential election the coming March. Chen Li-an, who had been Minister of Economic Affairs in the late 1980s, Minister of National Defense in the early 1990s and President of the Control Yuan, was the first to challenge Lee. He dropped his membership in the KMT to do this and registered as an independent just as Lee was given the KMT's nomination. Lin Yang-kang, who was known as the country's top Taiwanese campaigner and a politician considered in line for the presidency, also opposed Lee. Opposition also came from Hau Pei-tsun, who was one of the nation's foremost military heroes, a past Minister of Defense, and Premier up to early 1993 who while in that position had been feuding publicly with President Lee. Lin and Hau joined forces to run against Lee and did so as independents, though they did not resign their membership in the KMT. In fact, their actions stirred up a heated debate in the party, provoked by members who wanted to have them expelled.

The New Party did especially well at the polls in the December 1995 Legislative Yuan election, increasing its representation in the lawmaking branch of government by threefold. The DPP increased its seats, though many of its leaders, especially some that promoted Taiwan's independence, lost. During the campaigning, the KMT promised to do something about vote buying, which had become an even bigger concern to the electorate. Minister of Justice Ma Ying-jeou had a number of candidates arrested, most from the KMT, which earned him the wrath of many in his party. Meanwhile, cynics said that he was not being allowed to do his job and predicted he would not be kept in office. Crime also became a serious issue of widespread public concern due to an overall increase in the crime rate and a rash of sensational crimes, including kidnappings and murders (even though crime was still not a serious problem in Taiwan as measured by global standards).

In March 1996, just three months after this election, the Republic of China held its first-ever, direct presidential election contest. President Lee and his running mate Premier Lien Chan ran

against two sets of independent candidates (mentioned above) in addition to the DPP's Peng Ming-min (known as the father of Taiwan independence) and Frank Hsieh, a younger DPP activist. The PLA again staged military exercises and conducted missile tests to influence the election. The missile tests, actually a series of tests, involved the use of live warheads that hit close to Taiwan's two major ports and were, as a consequence, even more provocative than the ones done in 1995. Sea and air lanes had to be closed. In direct response to the PRC's actions, the United States dispatched two aircraft carriers, each carrying nuclear weapons and accompanied by a flotilla of ships, to the area. This time, however, the PLA's intimidation backfired and its actions succored President Lee and Premier Lien. The tests evoked anger among Taiwan's voters rather than shock and fear as in 1995.

In addition, Lee's experience, a well-organized campaign, division and disarray among the other candidates' camps and a number of other factors helped give Lee Teng-hui and Lien Chan an impressive victory. The two garnered 54 percent of the popular vote. Many DDP voters cast ballots for Lee, seeing their own candidate as less than experienced, and seeing Lee as taking a tough stance against Beijing's threats, and to some as a supporter of Taiwan independence (Lee's views were fuzzy on this matter). The New Party, which supported Lin and Hau, was seen by the electorate as pro-PRC at a time when ill-feelings toward Beijing ran high. In addition, their promotion of clean politics and an anti-isolationist foreign policy influenced few voters in the context of an external threat.

The election was heralded throughout the world as a gigantic step forward in Taiwan's process of democratizing, the Western media proclaiming it the first such election in 5,000 years of Chinese history. Clearly, President Lee had a new and, apparently, very strong mandate.

Simultaneous with the presidential election was a National Assembly election contest. Questions about the future of that "parliamentary" body, since its most important function had heretofore been to elect the president and vice-president, arose during the campaign and subsequent election. The opposition DPP, which in 1991 had put the issue of independence in its platform which had helped cause it to lose big in that National Assembly election, pursued a much more intelligent campaign. This time, the DPP performed very well. In fact, its "victory" (reaping big gain in seats, but not a majority) sent the message that President Lee was doing well



but the KMT was not and in the future the ruling party would see its fortunes rise or fall depending on Lee. While this was far from the whole story, it was the most widely heard explanation for the one-dimensional KMT victory.

During the campaigning, the issue arose that President Lee would "win," and thereby have a mandate, only if he bested James Soong's popular vote of 52 percent. Selecting Lien Chan, a Taiwanese, as his running mate, even while Lien remained premier, signalled that the top political leadership in Taiwan was going to be (except for Soong) totally Taiwanese. Before, there had been a balance (with Lee's previous vice-president having been Mainland Chinese and all premiers before Lien having been Mainland Chinese). It is also worthy of note that the challenge to Lee in this election came from Mainland Chinese, many who supported Chen Li-an (who is a Mainlander) or Lin Yang-kang (because of running mate Hau, an outspoken anti-Lee Mainland Chinese) and not so much from the DPP. Some said this caused President Lee to distrust Mainland Chinese (or to distrust and dislike them more, according to those who already saw him pushing Mainlanders out of the KMT) and to seek to make the government totally Taiwanese. KMT cooperation with the DPP rather than the NP in the Legislative Yuan at this time was also a factor in this sentiment, as was a friendly relationship between President Lee and Taipei Mayor Chen.

In December, the Presidential Office hosted a National Development Conference to debate a number of monumental, systemic political problems and to recommend solutions.<sup>3</sup> President Lee probably hoped to repeat what a similar National Affairs Conference had done in 1990 (which among other things had recommended the retirement of the "elder parliamentarians," who were elected when the ROC government held elections on the mainland or were subsequently appointed to office and terminating the Temporary Provisions to the Constitution, which negated a number of civil and political liberty provisions in that document, after which

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3. For details on the conference, see Linda Chao, Ramon H. Myers, and James A. Robinson, "Promoting Effective Democracy, Chinese Style: Taiwan's National Development Conference," *Asian Survey*, Vol. XXVII, No. 7, July 1997, pp. 669-682. Also see James A. Robinson, "Consensus Forged," *Free China Review*, March 1997, pp. 30-32 and interviews conducted with a number of noted politicians in the same issue of that publication.

these reforms were adopted).<sup>4</sup> However, instead of proposing reforms that could be easily implemented and which would make the government popular, the recommendations of the National Development Conference had the opposite effect. The most important recommendation coming from the Conference was to reduce the size of or eliminate the provincial government. This immediately provoked James Soong to tender his resignation (though it was not accepted). A storm of protest followed, generated by those who saw this as tantamount to declaring Taiwan independent, joined by provincial government employees, related businesses and supporters of Soong. The National Assembly subsequently became bogged down in writing constitutional amendments to operationalize the National Development Conference's recommendations. This further confused the public about the reforms of the polity and it was presented to the public in ways that they did not care about or hardly understood.

By early spring, it was quite apparent that the government and the ruling KMT were suffering from a conspicuous decline in public support. The controversy over the constitutional amendments, in part, caused this. Other issues effecting this decline were crime and corruption. Even some high officials and noted citizens had been the victims of extortion, violence and kidnapping. The government, including President Lee and Minister of Justice Liao Cheng-hao (Ma Ying-jeou having been transferred to the position of Minister without Portfolio), railed against crime and promised action. Yet, a KMT legislator, Luo Fu-tzu, who is widely regarded to have gang ties, sat as the chairman of the Legislative Yuan's judiciary committee. With only a two seat majority in the lawmaking body, KMT leaders were reluctant to do anything.<sup>5</sup> A 21st Century Foundation poll conducted at this time reflected that 61 percent of respondents were dissatisfied with the lawmaking body of government.<sup>6</sup> Most of the blame was put on the KMT.

The kidnapping of famous television star Pai Ping-ping's teenage daughter in April followed by a ransom demand for \$5 million, and then her torture and brutal murder, rivetted public attention on the worsening crime situation in Taiwan and ties between criminals and politicians. Citizens organized a protest demonstration which

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4. See Richard R. Vuysteke, "Thankfully, History Does Not Repeat Itself," *China News*, June 22, 1997, p. 4.

5. Julian Baum, "Perilous Politics," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, May 1, 1997, p. 18.

6. *Ibid.*

some observers said drew more than 50,000 people and was the biggest in Taiwan's history.<sup>7</sup> The protestors demanded government action and called for President Lee to "admit mistakes," replace the cabinet and Vice-President and Premier Lien Chan to resign. Talk radio callers even suggested the country return to martial law. President Lee subsequently issued a public apology.<sup>8</sup>

On May 8, former Justice Minister Ma Ying-jeou resigned from his position of Minister without Portfolio, saying he was "ashamed" over the recent crimes.<sup>9</sup> Ma had been known for his unflinching honesty and his undaunted efforts to crack down on vote-buying in several election campaigns. Some commentators called him the KMT's "last hope for reform." Vice-President and Premier Lien Chan subsequently appeared on a television talk show for the first time ever to try to convince the public that something was being done about the surge in crime.<sup>10</sup> A few days later, President Lee failed to present his state-of-the-nation address to the National Assembly because protestors from the New Party blocked his entry into the hall.<sup>11</sup>

The return of Hong Kong to the People's Republic of China by Britain on July 1 added further to Taiwan's woes. The PRC's newly acquired sovereignty over Hong Kong painfully reminded citizens in Taiwan of Beijing's claim to territory governed by the Republic of China and that Beijing had proclaimed recently that Taiwan was next to be absorbed by the fatherland. The People's Republic of China had even set a deadline for this action. This in turn brought back memories of the PLA conducting missile tests in the Taiwan Strait in 1995 and 1996. Hong Kong also created serious problems for Taiwan when it reverted to mainland rule, because most of Taiwan's trade and investment in China passed through Hong Kong.

President Lee promptly and forcefully declared that Taiwan possessed sovereignty, that it was not like Hong Kong (which had been a colony) and Beijing's "one country, two systems" formula would not apply to Taiwan. The government forthwith refused to cancel military exercises in the Taiwan Strait just prior to Hong Kong's return to underscore its opposition to Beijing's demands.

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7. Julian Baum, "Fear and Loathing," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, May 15, 1997, p. 16.

8. *Ibid.*

9. Julian Baum, "Storm Warning," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, May 22, 1997, p. 16.

10. *Ibid.*

11. *Ibid.*

Meanwhile, a public opinion survey in Taiwan recorded the largest citizen response ever in favor of independence; in fact, for the first time ever supporters of independence outnumbered advocates of a future linkup with China.<sup>12</sup>

### III. PRELUDE TO THE CONGRESS

Although the Nationalist Party or Kuomintang has been democratized in recent years, clearly no longer operating as a single-party in an authoritarian state, it is still organized in some ways as the Leninist party it once was. The Party Congress is comprised of delegates numbering approximately 2,300, chosen by election in advance (in July in this case) by the Party's full membership. The delegates to the Party Congress then elect, at the opening of the Congress, the Party Chairman (who then picks vice-chairmen) and the Central Committee (each delegate casting one vote for Chairman and 115 for the Central Committee). The Central Committee (a body which meets yearly to review policy) is made up of 200-plus members (230 in this case), or one in ten of the delegates. Since the Chairman is chosen first, he or she is able to submit a list of names that are his or her favorites or "recommendations" for seats on the Central Committee. Each nominee must, whether on the Chairman's list or not, be nominated and seconded by a minimum of eight delegates. Party Congress delegates vote for favorites among a group of over 600 candidates (640 to be precise at this Congress). After the Central Committee membership is decided, the Chairman then provides a list of appointed candidates (sixteen) for the powerful thirty-three member Central Standing Committee. The remaining seventeen are elected by the Central Committee.

The procedure for choosing the Chairman, the Central Committee and the Central Standing Committee were made more democratic by the introduction of the secret ballot (voting previously was accomplished by delegates standing to be counted). Prior to this Congress, KMT leaders enlisted Acer Sertek, Inc. (Taiwan's premier computer company) to provide advanced technology to do the vote taking and counting. Each delegate was given a PIN number to ensure confidentiality, and results of the voting were

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12. Julian Baum, "Wishful Thinking," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, July 17, 1997, p. 20.

made public within ten minutes of the last person casting his or her vote.<sup>13</sup>

The advancing of democratic procedures in the realms of vote casting and tallying was worthy of praise. Yet the fact that the Congress had to discuss and debate party policy less than a month after being elected—clearly not enough time to reflect and discuss issues intelligently and thoroughly—showed that reform was still needed. Making party policy and formulating the party's platform was primarily, in fact almost exclusively, left up to the top leadership, with the Party Congress serving as essentially a rubber stamp organization whose function it was to approve the party platform. During the debate on policy issues delegates were also distracted by colleagues meeting behind the scenes and forming factions to enhance their votes and doing horse trading for votes to the coveted Central Committee slots.<sup>14</sup> This does not prove, however, that the KMT utilizes undemocratic procedures in electing its top leaders any more than other political parties throughout the world or even other parties in Taiwan. In fact, simply looking at selection procedures, the KMT would probably be judged as a fairly democratic party, even among parties in democratic countries.<sup>15</sup> Yet it was not viewed as very good, by either delegates or the media, in the context of the nation democratizing, nor did it help the KMT's image.

Also dampening the spirit of debate, but facilitating sorely needed party discipline, was the fact that a number of party members had been expelled, disciplined or stripped of some of their

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13. See Keng Bok-sui, "KMT Goes On-line for Congress," *China News*, August 13, 1997, p. 2.

14. This writer was on the scene before and during the Congress and observed delegates engaging in vote trading meetings. He also saw candidates' leaflets listing their qualifications, etc. passed out to other delegates and received a number of them under his hotel room door.

15. The debate about the degree or level of democracy in the KMT can be endless. Those who argue that there is none cite its past, the use of party money (the KMT being the richest party in the world lending itself to such charges) to keep members in line and the view that Lee Teng-hui has not tried very much to democratize the party in recent years. On the other hand, political parties in Western democracies are generally not very democratic in terms of their rules and procedures. In addition, it is no longer perceived that membership in the KMT is very relevant to getting ahead in life in Taiwan or that the other parties in Taiwan are significantly more democratic in their rules and procedures. Finally, President Lee's clout, which is seen as proof of undemocratic methods and attitudes, comes from the fact that he has a 90 percent approval rate among party delegates. (For this figure, see "Taiwan: Kyodo Previews KMT Party Congress," *Foreign Broadcasting Information Service-China (hereinafter FBIS)*, August 24, 1997.

party privileges in the months leading up to the Congress. As a matter of fact, only days before the 15th Party Congress opened, President Lee was reported to have recommended harsh penalties for KMT "dissenters" in the National Assembly who opposed the KMT's constitutional reform proposals (the most important being drastically cutting the size of or eliminating the provincial government), including suspending certain party memberships for a period of time. (Earlier, one of the most outspoken critics of the reform in the National Assembly, Lu Hsueh-chang had been stripped of his party privileges.) It was also reported that Lee would reward deputies who had helped with the reform by pushing them for election to the Party's Central Committee.<sup>16</sup>

A more vexing problem facing the Party's leadership and party unity leading up to the Congress, however, was the rift between President Lee Teng-hui and Governor James Soong. As noted above, following the National Development Conference held in December 1996, at which time it was decided to drastically downsize or even get rid of the provincial government, Governor Soong tendered his resignation. Premier Lien did not accept the resignation and Soong remained at his job and efforts were subsequently made to reach a compromise. But this proved elusive and differences between Lee and Soong were vented publicly before the Congress. Both had strong support for their positions. Lee's position was reasonable inasmuch as the government needed to be streamlined and the cost of a dual or overlapping system was burdensome.<sup>17</sup> Also, the opposition Democratic Progressive Party favored this change and its support was a *sine qua non* to make other constitutional changes (since the KMT did not have a two-thirds majority in the National Assembly). Finally, both constitutional and extra-constitutional changes were sorely needed at this point in time to make the system work after the rapid progress made in the political development and democratization of Taiwan.

Soong's position on the matter was that the governorship had just been made an elective office in a move to further the democratization process and that dealing with overlap in government should involve compromise. Further, Soong argued that money would not necessarily be saved because provincial government employees had

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16. See "Lee Seeks Harsh Penalties for Party Dissenters," *China News*, August 1, 1997, p. 1.

17. The provincial government has been estimated to cost taxpayers around U.S.\$1.1 billion annually. See Todd Crowell and Laurie Underwood, "Plotting the Future: Discord Erupts Over Political Reform," *Asiaweek*, January 10, 1997, p. 20.

the right to transfer to other government positions and that outright elimination of the provincial government would reflect a dangerous two-China policy.<sup>18</sup>

In early July, little more than a month before the opening of the Congress, KMT leaders, particularly Secretary-General Wu Poh-hsiung and Yan Ying-chi, executive director of the party's Policy Coordination Committee, began pressuring KMT National Assembly deputies to vote for the "reform" constitutional amendments being debated at the time (including provisions to end election of the provincial governor).<sup>19</sup> Clearly, the party leadership, including President Lee Teng-hui, wanted the amendments passed before Party Congress. This led pundits to speculate at this time that the constitutional reforms were, in fact, a scheme against Soong (to deprive Soong of an official position of importance two years before the next presidential election, while adopting an absolute majority system of electing the president that would favor a candidate with party support rather than a popular candidate) to pave the way for a Lien Chan presidency in 2000.<sup>20</sup> Meanwhile, a special KMT organization called *Han Hsing* was established to push the reforms and support Lien, challenge Soong, and deal with another organization called *Tien Tan*, which was chaired by Deputy Governor Wu Jung-ming and promoted Soong.<sup>21</sup>

When the amendments passed in mid-July, Governor Soong challenged the central government to approve his earlier letter of resignation and summoned a press conference where he went public with his complaints about abolishing the provincial government.<sup>22</sup> This move on Soong's part fanned the flames of controversy and evoked a crisis for the government and the KMT, since it was uncertain whether, if the Cabinet approved the resignation, it would be taking a legal action, and if an election would have to be called immediately (and the KMT without an immediately viable candidate). Rumors about the government accepting his resignation

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18. The views of both President Lee and Governor Soong about this issue were reported extensively in the Taiwan media during the weeks leading up to the 15th Party Congress.

19. "KMT Pressures Deputies on Constitutional Reforms," *China Post*, July 9, 1997, p. 1.

20. "Lien Presidency Bit a Mystery," *China Post*, July 6, 1997, p. 12.

21. See Virginia Sheng, "Lien, Soong Gear up for Presidential Bids," *Free China Journal*, July 11, 1997, p.2. Tien Tan had been created earlier, in 1994, as a vote-garnering organization for Soong during his election for governor.

22. "Soong Challenges Lien to Confirm Resignation," *China News*, July 25, 1997, p. 1.

spread, and were said to have been started to test Soong and public reaction.<sup>23</sup> The upshot was that the KMT leadership chose not to dismiss a very popular KMT governor since it was certain to hurt KMT unity, increase ethnic tensions and hurt the ruling party's chances in elections for city mayors and magistrates in November. Shortly thereafter, it was reported that Lien Chan invited Soong to be his running mate in the presidential elections in 2000 and Soong bluntly rejected the offer, presumably because he had ambitions to be a presidential candidate himself.<sup>24</sup>

President Lee Teng-hui, as a result of the conflict, became more hostile toward Soong. In early August Lee said that Soong's actions constituted "an act of insurgency." He also intimated that he was aware of Governor Soong's efforts to block passage of the constitutional amendments and that he was aware of his use of staff and supporters to campaign against the reforms. Lee, in addition, expressed dissatisfaction with Secretary-General Wu Poh-hsiung for defending Soong. But Lee reportedly said he did not want to accept Soong's resignation for fear of turning him into a "tragic hero."<sup>25</sup> President Lee refused to meet with Soong and his office declared there was no reconciliation in sight.<sup>26</sup> The fight reportedly prompted many KMT members to avoid Soong and even eschew discussions about him or mention his name.<sup>27</sup>

Meanwhile, Lee's popularity, along with Lien Chan's, continued to plummet as public confidence in the party waned. Amplifying Lee's and Lien's plight a large number of demonstrators rallied to complain of the breakdown of social order, with protestors in one parade carrying political caricatures of President Lee as *Hei-pai-lang-chun* (a figure in Taiwanese opera with a face half white and half black—meaning two faced), while one of Taiwan's major newspapers (known for its anti-Lee stance) said Lee was "unable to distinguish right from wrong."<sup>28</sup> Lee's support in the party was also undermined by reports of close ties between him and Taipei mayor Chen Sui-bian, who was being touted as a strong candidate for the

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23. Governor Soong's Ultimatum to the Cabinet," *China Post*, July 25, 1997, p. 4.

24. "Government Anxious to Bury Soong Controversy," *China News*, July 26, 1997, p.1; "Lien, Soong Ticket Still Too Early to Be Decided: KMT," *China Post*, July 27, 1997, p. 1.

25. "Lee Gives Soong Cold Shoulder," *China News*, August 4, 1997, p. 2.

26. "No Meeting Planned, Says Spokesman," *China News*, August 4, 1997, p. 2.

27. *Supra* note 25.

28. *United Daily News*, July 25, 1997, cited in "Lee Turns Taiwan Upside Down," *China News*, July 26, 1997, p. 6.



presidency in 2000 and alternatively by claims that Chen had manipulated Lee. Because of this and cooperation between KMT and DPP leaders in passing the amendments to the constitution, there was even serious talk of the KMT and the DPP merging, to the chagrin of many KMT stalwarts.<sup>29</sup>

A fortnight before the Congress opened, KMT officials announced that Soong would be nominated for a position on the Central Committee, but that the party would not muster support for him.<sup>30</sup> On August 23, the day before the Congress opened, Governor Soong arrived in San Francisco for a week-long visit. He said that he had taken the trip to avoid "unnecessary annoyances" and admitted that the trip was timed to coincide with the 15th KMT Party Congress. Soong also stated that he would not take part in any more KMT meetings or activities.<sup>31</sup>

Meanwhile, some other less-noticed controversies were seething. Leaders and members of the Legislative Yuan expressed their displeasure regarding its low representation in the KMT Central Committee and lobbied to increase it.<sup>32</sup> Women sought to increase their numbers by getting the party to agree on quotas. The military also seemed to be trying to exert some influence over the Congress.<sup>33</sup>

Just prior to the opening of the Congress, President Lee met with delegates and advised them that the "changing face of party politics" meant that the KMT could no longer play a dominant, passive role in politics and must work hard to win public support. He also spoke of building up national defenses, improving social order, implementing an Asia-Pacific operations hub project, and implementing spiritual reform. He specifically addressed the matter of streamlining the provincial government saying that the central and provincial government overlapped by up to 95 percent.<sup>34</sup> Responses to his comments were mixed.

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29. "KMT and DPP May Form New Party: Shih Ming-teh," *China News*, August 6, 1997, p. 2.

30. "Soong Gets Committee Nomination," *China Post*, August 12, 1997, p. 16.

31. Central News Agency, August 24, 1997 cited in *FBIS-China*, August 24, 1997.

32. "Taiwan: Kyodo Previews KMT Party Congress," *FBIS*, August 24, 1997. KMT Legislative Yuan members reportedly sought to increase their numbers from 32 to 46.

33. "Military Denies Officers Sent to KMT Congress," *China News*, August 27, 1997, p. 2.

34. "Li Teng-hui Comments on Upcoming KMT National Congress," *Central News Agency*, August 16, 1997, cited in *FBIS*, August 16, 1997.

Political analysts and the media, in Taiwan and abroad, saw the main issues to be resolved at the Congress, and which, incidently, were thought to reflect how the ruling party was faring, as: (1) electing the party chairman, four vice chairmen and the Central Committee and the Central Standing Committee; (2) consolidating the party's leadership and preparing current leaders as the next generation of successors; (3) boosting party unity and preparing for local elections in November; (4) formulating a policy to deal with the People's Republic of China following the return of Hong Kong; (5) adopting measures to cope with social stability, especially the crime issue, and corruption.<sup>35</sup>

While there was no doubt that President Lee Teng-hui would be reelected chairman of the ruling party, there was some question as to the percentage of vote he would receive. Polls indicated that he had support from over 90 percent of delegates and this figure was being cited as a goal juxtaposed beside his reelection with 82.5 percent of the vote at the last party congress. In other words, Lee was anticipating a big victory. The breadth of Lee's support among delegates to the Congress was considered important since many of Lee's policies were controversial within party ranks and his leadership of the party and the nation had been criticized widely in the media in the months leading up to the Congress due to the rash of crime, lingering issues of corruption and constitutional reform. Lee was also thought to need a strong mandate to be able to decide who his successor would be and to continue to lead the party after his term as president ends in 2000 (assuming he will not run again, which he has said is the case). All of this may be summarized by querying whether, and when, Lee might become a lame duck.

The election of vice-chairmen was considered less than indicative of future trends or changed party leadership since these positions are largely titular or ceremonial. On the other hand, there was some speculation that James Soong might be, or should be, given one of these positions. The Central Committee and its Central Standing Committee in addition to the Central Advisory Committee would, according to observers, reflect the make-up of the KMT's future leadership and would indicate who was rising and falling in terms of influence on party affairs. But there was little anticipation of broad change or even significant trend-setting.

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35. See, for example, Lee San Chouy, "Party Unity the Order of the Day for KMT," *Straits Times* (Singapore), August 24, 1997, p. 14.

In the realm of party leadership, inasmuch as the KMT is the ruling party and hopes to remain in power, party leaders were thought to be future government leaders, as well. President Lee, most observers perceived, supported Premier and Vice-President Lien Chan to be his successor. Lee also supported Vincent Siew to be elevated in rank and stature. Several months earlier, Lien Chan offered to resign from the premiership, due to the fact that the Legislative Yuan had challenged his holding that position while being concurrently Vice President, but more immediately due to a 50,000-person protest over a dramatic increase in crime. In July, Lien announced that he would step down from the premiership the following month. In August, less than one week before the opening of the Congress, President Lee named Vincent Siew the new premier.

Siew was to be the nation's first Taiwan-born premier (Lien Chan was the first Taiwanese premier though he was not actually born in Taiwan) and the first to have been elected to the Legislative Yuan (over which he presides). He was also regarded as a smart politician, well-liked by the public and known as an expert on economic issues. Siew also gained stature for winning a Legislative Yuan seat in 1995 against a tough DPP incumbent and for running President Lee's successful election campaign in 1996. If Siew, according to observers, did not receive a large number of votes to sit on the Central Committee, it would be a loss of face for Lee and a repudiation of his leadership. A large vote for Governor Soong, some said, would have the same effect.<sup>36</sup>

The KMT also needed to demonstrate at the Party Congress that the party was unified and that it was prepared for the local elections in November. Clearly the party was much less split than at the two previous congresses in terms of challenges to the top leadership and contending party factions. On the other hand, opinion polls indicated, and newspaper commentators concurred, that the KMT would not do well in the local elections in November. This evoked concern that the party was not in healthy condition and that party members did not enthusiastically support the party platform and that many were seeking benefits for themselves and were not concerned about the future of the party. Speaking to the party's provincial committee in early August, Lee made an appeal for party unity and devotion to the KMT, saying that all party members must

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36. Lee San Chouy, "KMT Set for Next Century with 15th Party Congress," *Straits Times*, August 25, 1997, p. 25.

set aside their own personal interests and honestly unite in unanimous support of the party's nominated candidates.<sup>37</sup>

The party's stance, which serves as the foundation for Taipei's policy on relations with Beijing became a sensitive issue in the wake of the return of Hong Kong to the People's Republic of China on July 1. President Lee was being assailed by the New Party for wrecking cross-strait relations and by the Democratic Progressive Party for not taking a tougher stance favoring independence. He was being criticized within the KMT for secretly supporting an independent Taiwan. Trade and investment across the Taiwan Strait were also hot issues. Clearly the KMT needed to clarify its policies in a way that would send some positive signals to Beijing, the United States and the international community to help the party's image.

President Lee and the KMT leadership were the target of public anger and disgust over the rise of crime on the island. Both the president and other party leaders understood the party's future depended upon restoring social stability and confidence in the government and talked about these problems often. Poignantly underscoring the problem of crime just a fortnight before the opening of the Congress was a gun battle in Taipei between police and kidnapers of the daughter of a famous singer during which one kidnapper was killed and two others escaped. Taiwan's top police official, the director of the National Police Administration, Yao Kao-chiao, resigned after this incident; which happened at a time when members of the same gang abducted and tortured a local businessman.<sup>38</sup>

#### IV. NEW LEADERSHIP AND PERSONNEL

Following a day of opening ceremonies, pomp and speeches on August 26, votes were cast for chairman of the party. President Lee Teng-hui, incumbent chairman of the KMT, ran unopposed—although a small group of party delegates tried briefly to organize opposition to Lee.<sup>39</sup> Of the 2,267 delegates to the Congress formally seated, 2,209 voted. Lee received 2,064 votes, or 93.4 percent of the

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37. *Ibid.*

38. See Teresa Poole, "Taiwan PM Quits to Have Electoral Makeover," *The Independent* (London), August 22, 1997, p. 13.

39. Some of these simply did not like Lee. Others opposed Lee serving another term, saying that this violated the Party constitution. (The Party constitution is, in fact, unclear on this matter because Lee served before the 13th Party Congress.) See "Party Chairman Has Two More Terms: A Violation of Party Charter?" *Shih Chieh Jih Pao* (World Journal) August 26, 1997, p. A8.

votes cast. Delegates representing Taipei city and Overseas Delegates cast 100 percent of their votes for Lee. Provincial delegates voted overwhelmingly for Lee—giving rise to assertions that the central and provincial party organizations were working in tandem (meaning the issue of abolishing the provincial government was no longer dividing the party).<sup>40</sup> Inasmuch as Lee received a larger portion of the vote than at the 14th Party Congress held in 1993—82.5 percent—this was seen as a victory. Lee forthwith (the secret vote tallying was done by computer in about two hours) received an official certificate from Lee Yuan-zu, chairman of the Congress presidium, formally naming him party chairman; he immediately thanked the delegates for their support and declared that “with the help and synergy of other party members, the party could realize its goal of writing (its) achievements into history.”<sup>41</sup> Lee also called on party members to “consolidate their efforts to develop Taiwan and to reform the party.” He vowed to restructure the party and promote democracy in the nation.<sup>42</sup>

The high percentage of votes cast for Lee can be explained in large measure by the fact that he was unopposed in his run for reelection to the party chairmanship. In addition, having held the office of president and having been elected to that position in the nation's first direct election of an executive leader less than eighteen months earlier, Lee was the natural person for the job. Clearly, electing someone other than Lee would have created an untenable situation: the ruling party would then have been led by a party leader who might oppose Lee's presidential policies or decisions. Worse still, the party head, who is not elected by the voters at large, would be able to contradict decisions made by someone who was popularly elected.<sup>43</sup> Hence, Lee was not opposed and his victory was widely anticipated.

The smooth election of President Lee to party chairman for another four years suggested to some observers that the KMT was more unified than previously thought and that the controversy over reforms that “froze” the provincial government was not as serious as perceived over the last several months. Some viewed the vote,

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40. *Ibid.*

41. William Ide, “Majority Elects Lee Chairman,” *China News*, August 27, 1997, p. 1.

42. Susan Yu, “KMT Congress Elects New Leadership Lineup,” *Free China Journal*, August 29, 1997, p. 1.

43. For further details, see “Lee Re-elected as Chairman of the Ruling KMT,” *China Post*, August 27, 1997, p. 4.

moreover, as giving Lee a mandate to push further political reform in the form of additional constitutional amendments and changes in the party's structure, rules and personnel, if he wanted. It also suggested Lee's authority in the party would last beyond his term as president and hinted that he would be able to influence, if not decide, who the party's candidates for high office would be for the next four years. It would unquestionably strengthen Lee's authority within the party for at least a while, according to most observers.<sup>44</sup> It also had a positive effect on the meeting, since some perceived that an absence of opposition to Lee meant that the party leadership was stronger and more unified. The business community demonstrated its approval of the vote as reflected in the fact that the stock market rose 105.37 points to 10,116.84, a seven-year high.<sup>45</sup>

Following his election to another term as party chairman, Lee appointed four party vice-chairmen: Vice President Lien Chan, former Vice-President Lee Yuan-zu, former Premier Yu Kuo-hua and former Examination Yuan President Chiu Chuang-huan. These appointments were approved immediately and without opposition—confirmed by 1,690 delegates simply raising their hands in approval.<sup>46</sup>

The listing of Lien Chan before the others, especially three older (in particular Lee Yuan-zu, who was listed second at the last Congress) and in many ways more senior KMT leaders, was seen as significantly unusual.<sup>47</sup> It was interpreted to be a signal by Lee that Lien was to be regarded as the number two party leader. Lee likely also wanted it to be known, or underscore this to party delegates, that Lien was his choice for the party's nomination of presidential candidate in 2000—as opposed to Soong or some other top KMT official.<sup>48</sup> Lee may likewise have wanted to ensure that the KMT's leadership remain Taiwanese—Lien being the only Taiwanese among the vice-chairmen.<sup>49</sup> Being the “first vice chairman” would

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44. *Ibid.*

45. *Supra* note 42.

46. *Ibid.*

47. The others were clearly more senior to Lien in terms of age. Lien, on the other hand, has had considerable experience in the party and the government. He was the youngest minister ever at age 45. He has served in a host of important positions in the government, gaining probably the broadest experience of any top official in the Republic of China.

48. “Lee Re-elected as Chairman of the Ruling KMT,” *China Post*, August 27, 1997, p. 4.

49. Some delegates at the Congress said this, as did observers present at the time.

also, no doubt, help Lien succeed Lee as chairman of the party in 2001 when Lee's term expires. The previous day, Lee rejected a proposal to appoint Governor Soong a fifth vice-chairman.<sup>50</sup> In fact, according to the press, he angrily refused to listen to this proposal.<sup>51</sup>

The Congress also voted to add 115 seats to the Party's Central Advisory Council (a group of mainly "elder statesmen" in the party, many of whom have retired from other duties). The Advisory Council at the 15th Party Congress had 276 members. Among the previous members, two gave up their seats to run for Central Committee seats. The remaining 274 members were reelected, which, with the addition of 115, made the body 389 much too large in size to carry on good debate.<sup>52</sup> That, in fact, may have been the intent of the decision to enlarge the body; alternatively it was simply a place to put older, loyal party leaders while ensuring their continued support of the party's leadership and its policies.

The competitive election at the Congress was held the next day—for seats on the Central Committee. Three hundred and eighty-three candidates ran for 230 positions: 230 were nominated by the party leadership and 153 sponsored by fellow delegates. (Each delegate was allowed to vote for 115.) Of those nominated by the party, 165, or 71.1 percent, won seats. Among "independents" 65, or 42.5 percent, won.<sup>53</sup> (The make-up of the new Central Committee is discussed below.) In addition to winning, for many, the amount of votes garnered was important. The tally votes likewise mirrored party factionalism, disunity and more.

Most surprising, and revealing in terms of dissent within the party and dissatisfaction with President Lee's leadership especially the decision to abolish the provincial government, was the fact that Governor James Soong (who was placed tenth among nominees by the party hierarchy, i.e. President Lee) was the biggest vote-getter, with 1,696 votes. Soong's vote surpassed by five votes even that of Premier Siew, who had just been appointed premier and was Lee's number one pick (the vice-chairmen not being considered in this list). This was seen as a rebuke of President Lee and seemed to offset or dilute the significance of his large victory in terms of the

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50. "KMT Delegate Proposes Soong for KMT Deputy Chairman," *Central News Agency*, August 25, 1997, cited in *FBIS*, August 25, 1997.

51. "Lee Teng-hui's Forthright Talk: Vice Chairman Is for Me to Propose," *World Journal*, August 26, 1997, p. A2.

52. *Supra* note 42.

53. For the numbers, see *ibid.*

strong support he got for reelection to the chairmanship of the party.

One writer called the large vote for Soong a “wake-up call” for Chairman Lee, other top party leaders and even the party in general, saying that it would give Lee “some pressure” and might even affect the direction in which he is leading the party.<sup>54</sup> Others opined that the strong vote for Soong reflected opposition to Lien Chan who was seen as the strongest candidate to win the party’s nomination as its presidential candidate in 2000. Still others said the vote had to do with the fate of the provincial government, which, despite overlap with the national government, had a good reputation for delivering services to the people. Abolishing the provincial government also seemed to be a move toward Taiwan independence.<sup>55</sup> Finally, 200-plus Overseas Chinese delegates were reported to have all cast votes for Soong as a protest against “party planning” and as a call for an end to party bickering.<sup>56</sup> Transcending this explanation, Soong was very popular with the party rank-and-file. A poll published by one of Taiwan’s leading newspapers the day before the Congress indicated that Soong was the party members’ first choice for “first” vice-chairman as well as the KMT’s preferred presidential candidate in 2000.<sup>57</sup>

Premier Siew was second in the vote count, KMT Secretary-General Wu Poh-hsiung was third, Kaohsiung Mayor Wu Den-yih was fourth, former Minister of Interior Lin Fong-cheng was fifth, Minister of Justice Liao Chen-hao was sixth, Taiwan Provincial Lt. Governor Wu Rong-ming was seventh, Foreign Minister John Chang was eighth, Council for Economic Planning and Development Chairman Chiang Ping-kung was ninth and Legislator Huang Chao-shun (also director-general of KMT’s Department of Women’s Affairs) was tenth. Premier Siew was first on President Lee’s list, followed by KMT Secretary-General Wu, National Assembly Speaker Fredrick Chien, Examination Yuan President Hsu Shui-teh

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54. William Ide, “Soong’s performance seen as a ‘wake-up call,’” *China News*, August 29, 1997, p. 2.

55. These views were expressed to this writer by a number of KMT members as well as independent observers at the time of the 15th Congress.

56. Keng Bok-sui, “Soong Grabs Most Votes,” *China News*, August 28, 1997, p. 1.

57. “Party Members Give the Strongest Support to Song Chu-yu [James Soong] for First Vice-Chairman,” *World Journal*, August 24, 1997, p. A6. Lien Chan ranked second in the poll, but there was a considerable gap, more than double regarding their choice for presidential candidates in 2000. Lien, however, ranked number one among party delegates.



and Legislative Yuan Speaker Liu Sung-fan.<sup>58</sup> The top ten vote-getters, like Soong, reflected disenchantment among delegates with the party's recommendations. Mayor Wu and former Minister of Interior Lin, who were numbers four and five respectively in the number of votes they received, were ranked only 21 and 42 on President Lee's list. Additionally, of the top ten, besides Soong, Premier Siew, Secretary-General Wu and Foreign Minister John Chang, the remainder of the top ten vote-getters were not on the party-recommended list of top candidates.<sup>59</sup>

Further supporting the view that there was opposition to Lee, or at least to his recommendations, provincial government employees won much bigger than the party planners and Chairman Lee had hoped or expected. Representing the provincial government (besides Governor Soong and Lt. Governor Wu) were 17 other provincial government officials and 8 provincial assemblymen. All were elected with strong delegate support.<sup>60</sup> This was unexpected and ostensibly reflected concern by delegates about the fate of the provincial government and/or support for James Soong. Alternatively, delegates sought to send a signal to President Lee and party leaders that they did not want to follow the party leadership's dictates. Another influential factor was Soong's supporters: advocates for not abolishing the provincial government were quite unified and well organized, and lobbied for votes very successfully.

Members of the central government administration claimed 36 seats, which analysts considered a large number. Local government and party officials also did well. Legislative Yuan deputies did not, winning only 29 seats (compared to 32 gained at the 14th Party Congress). In fact, ten legislators failed in their efforts to win seats. National Assembly members likewise found their representation disappointing, winning but 32 seats (compared to 34 at the 14th Congress); 25 failed in their bids for a seat. Some parliamentary leaders, moreover, failed to win a seat. National Assembly caucus secretary-general Chen Tzu-chin did not win enough votes to become a member of the new Central Committee. Others did not attain a high ranking. KMT legislative whip, Yao Eng-chi, ranked only 119th in vote getting. Some observers thought this was odd in view of Taiwan's recent democratization and the increasing importance of the two parliamentary bodies in this context as well as the

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58. Keng Bok-sui, "Siew Tops 'Lee's List,'" *China News*, August 27, 1997, p. 2.

59. Keng Bok-sui, "Soong Grabs the Most Votes," *China News*, August 28, 1997, p. 1.

60. *Supra* note 42.

critical role the National Assembly had played (and presumably would continue to play in ensuing months) in amending the Constitution consistent with the wishes of Party Chairman Lee and other top KMT officials.<sup>61</sup>

This, in fact, prompted analysts to see a rift in the party that might influence future bills and constitutional reform and/or a permanent decline in the influence of lawmakers in the party.<sup>62</sup> The top hierarchies of both the Legislative Yuan and the National Assembly were clearly unhappy with the results. KMT Legislative Yuan leaders had earlier expressed dissatisfaction with President Lee nominating only 26 of its members, in light of the fact that six more than this number currently held seats on the Central Committee. The National Assembly fared better, with 37 nominations on Lee's list, but its leadership had hoped for a lot more than this.<sup>63</sup> Following the release of Lee's list, members of both bodies began lobbying behind the scenes to win seats, but as it turned out this had little impact. There are several factors that explain why members of the parliamentary bodies of government did not do better, among them the fight between the two bodies over the National Assembly's decision in revising the Constitution not to give the Legislative Yuan the authority to disapprove of the President's choice of premier, as well as tension between both bodies, the two national parliamentary bodies and those who supported keeping the provincial government.

Also some said women fared poorly. Given the demands women had made for more seats and their expectations, this was true. Women made smaller gains than at the 14th Congress.<sup>64</sup> On the other hand women improved their numbers from the previous party congress (from 19 to 30) and attained more seats than the party planners recommended. Lee's list contained only 25 women. Legislator Huang Chao-shun, the top woman in the polling, got tenth place. She was 66th on Lee's list. Another 29 women won seats, including Minister of Interior Yeh Chin-feng (twenty-third in votes)

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61. The author heard this view expressed a number of times by observers at the congress.

62. *Supra* note 42.

63. See William Ide, "Lawmakers Scurry for Support in KMT Vote," *China Post*, August 27, 1997, p. 2. The writer suggests that National Assembly leaders hoped to get 78 seats on the Central Committee.

64. The new Central Committee elected at the 14th Party Congress found 19 women seated—nearly twice as many as at the 13th Congress. For details, see Copper, "The KMT's 14th Party Congress," *supra* note 1.

and Minister without Portfolio Shirley Kuo (seventy-fourth in votes).

The military reportedly was not represented at all at the Congress. According to an earlier statement by top military leaders, soldiers would remain non-partisan and neutral. However, during the meeting it was rumored that 52 delegates at the conference, spoke for the military. This was subsequently denied by General Kung Fan-ding, who declared that party organizations and activities are no longer allowed in the military, though he said individuals could participate in political parties.<sup>65</sup> In any event, observers and the media noticed when one notable military person—retired general Yang Tung-yun, head of the veterans' agency—was elected to the Central Committee. This was significant, because the 14th Congress did not elect any military person to such a position.<sup>66</sup>

Of the 230 names recommended by President Lee, 65 were defeated by delegates running on their own. This reflected the ability of a number of contenders to lobby or caucus for votes. It may also have been the product of a number of delegates voting for names not on the party list as a protest against Lee and the party's leadership. Clearly it was not anticipated that such a large number of delegates not on Lee's list would win. Secretary-General Wu tried to put a good face on this, saying that this was "only natural" when there was a free election, dismissing the importance of differences in the list of winners from the list of delegates recommended by the party.<sup>67</sup> Wu argued that this was not too different from previous congresses.<sup>68</sup>

The new Central Committee was noticeably younger and more Taiwanese. Business interests were well represented: C.F. Koo (of the Koo group) was number 11 in votes; Wang You-theng, chairman of Rebar, was number 40; President Enterprises chairman Kao Chin-yen was ranked 41; and Jeffery Koo of China Trust was 124. Ma Ying-jeou, even though he had resigned from his government position, ranked 51 in terms of the number of votes he received.<sup>69</sup>

Following the Central Committee voting, the Taiwan Stock Exchange dropped 223.18 points. Investors apparently perceived a power struggle within the ruling party and viewed the good per-

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65. *Supra* note 33.

66. Julian Baum, "In the Party Mood," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, September 11, 1997, p. 25.

67. *Central News Agency*, August 27, 1997 cited in *FBIS* August 27, 1997.

68. "Soong Tops KMT Committee Race," *China Post*, August 28, 1997, p. 1.

69. *Supra* note 58.

formance of delegates representing the provincial government as reflecting strong dissent in the KMT over the issue of the provincial government and the gravity of the conflict between President Lee and Governor Soong.<sup>70</sup>

Voting for the powerful Central Standing Committee presented fewer problems and much less dissatisfaction among KMT delegates to the Congress. The CSC, which was seated on August 28, was comprised of 16 members appointed by President Lee plus 17 elected by the Central Committee, an enlargement of two from the previous Central Standing Committee. Of the 17 elected, all were members suggested by party chairman Lee Teng-hui. President Lee's placement of Governor Soong on the list of 16 appointed members may have soothed feelings that were stirred the previous day with the election of the Central Committee. Also Secretary-General Wu Poh-hsiung met with 200 members of the Central Committee for lunch and pressured them to vote for Lee's favorites.<sup>71</sup> (For a list of both appointed and elected members of the Central Standing Committee, see Appendix.)

The new Central Standing Committee is comprised of a larger number of Taiwanese: two-thirds of its members (compared to 18 of 31 after the 14th Congress). Mainland Chinese only hold 10 of 33 seats. The overwhelming majority can be categorized as officials in some way: government, party or retired. Only two represent business, in contrast to the strong representation of business notables to the Central Committee. Three are women, compared to one in the 14th Congress. Aborigines were represented in this elite group for the first time.

## V. NEW POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

As noted above, delegates to the 15th Party Congress spent more time lobbying for positions on the Central Committee and doing other things than they did formulating new policies and programs. Also, many of the policies introduced for consideration by the delegates were presented in almost finished form by the top leadership with little debate or discussion needed or wanted. Nevertheless, a number of proposals and ideas, including some amendments to the Party constitution and plans for future KMT activities

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70. *Supra* note 42.

71. William Ide, "No Major Surprises in the KMT's Committee Election," *China News*, August 29, 1997, p. 1. Former legislator and noted scholar Wei Yung attacked the party's leadership for an undemocratic spirit.

and policies, were put forward. Clearly the meeting was not devoid of new ideas, discussions and proposals.

The first day of the Congress delegates heard an address by KMT Chairman Lee Teng-hui, a party report from Secretary-General Wu Poh-hsiung and an administrative report. Policy proposals and suggested amendments followed the two reports. President Lee's address and the two substantive reports reflected the party's leadership's views on new policies or directly promoted them.

President Lee's opening speech, as is usual for the chairman to give at a party congress, contained a summary of the KMT's history and an enumeration of the KMT's accomplishments.<sup>72</sup> In short, the address was an opportunity to hype the party and in that context cite problems, broach solutions and announce new policies. Among recent achievements cited by Lee were: an "unprecedented election" in 1996 that constituted a major and final step in democratizing the country while garnering international acclaim; constitutional amendments passed for the purpose of "readjusting of the central government system and streamlining the government organizational structure;" stable economic growth; progress in promoting high-tech industries; and a national health insurance system. Lee listed problems relating to national security, citing the following as the most important: Beijing's military threats in 1996; social unrest that has been evoked by major criminal cases; and diplomatic relations, which, he said, though constituting a serious problem because of Beijing's efforts to isolate the Republic of China, were nevertheless welcomed by various governments and people.

By putting crime and diplomatic relations in the category of national security, Lee may have calculated that he could deal with them more effectively; alternatively he sought to take advantage of his good image and strong public support in one area (Beijing's threat) to improve his reputation and the party's reputation on the other two. Lee, however, did not offer any specific policy recommendations; this was left to Secretary-General Wu and Vice-Chairman Lien. Chairman Lee then called for new policies and further efforts in the areas of ideological understanding, organizational quality and policy achievement.

Specifically, yet still not in the form of a tangible policy recommendation, he summoned a more international outlook, abandoning "remnant bureaucratic and formalist work style," and

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72. For Lee's speech, see *Chung-Yang Jih Pao* (Central Daily), Aug. 26, 1997, p. 2; *FBIS*, August 26, 1997.

communicating and consulting with other political parties. The speech, while short on policy specifics, was not unlike past party chairmen's speeches at party congresses. In fact, one could say that President Lee, as is usual in such address at party congresses, sought to deal only with general ideas and leave concrete policy proposals to subsequent speakers.

Secretary-General Wu's address was, compared to Lee's, pessimistic. Clearly it was full of warnings. Wu declared, for example, that the KMT's power base was eroding and the next few years would be critical in determining whether the party would remain in power. He noted that while Chairman Lee managed to win a landslide election in 1996 in the first direct presidential election, the KMT attained just over 40 percent of the vote in the earlier Legislative Yuan election and in a simultaneous (with the presidential and vice-presidential election) National Assembly election. He called this evidence of the fact that the KMT's dominance in the nation's political arena is eroding.

He spoke in harsh language about the fact many members did not understand the party's woes or its ultimate aims. He further iterated that party members have become apathetic and suspicious of the party's causes and goals. He specifically cited resistance to the KMT's restructuring and reform plans, illegal actions by a few members that have seriously undermined the party's image and created an impression with the public that the KMT cannot wipe out money and gang-linked politics. He called for "soul searching."

Wu reaffirmed the KMT's anti-communist, anti-independence policies. He said the party would cooperate with other parties but would not integrate with them. He declared that the KMT would work with the government to promote spiritual reform and eliminate political graft and organized crime. Finally, he asserted that the year-end local elections are "critical" to the party's future and promised that the party would nominate party standard-bearers with a clean image and professional capabilities.<sup>73</sup>

Vice-Chairman Lien Chan also addressed the delegates the opening day of the Congress. He focused on the issue of social order—an issue that has caused the KMT's reputation to suffer in the months leading up to the Congress as well as Lien's own prestige and image as a national leader (having been premier or head of the cabinet during the time crime and other social problems became

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73. "Party Official—KMT at Critical Juncture, Needs Reform," *Central News Agency*, August 25, 1997, cited in *FBIS*, August 25, 1997.

much more acute) as mirrored in various opinion polls. He defended the cabinet's work and lauded its accomplishments. Lien, in fact, asserted that the government's bad reputation on the issue of crime was not deserved, citing a decline (from 1993 to 1996, criminal cases down 13.9 percent, firearms violations down 27.9 percent and intimidation and kidnapping down 24.2 percent).<sup>74</sup> He noted that the cabinet had enacted the Organized Crime Control Statute and the Anti-Money Laundering Act. He also pointed out that the government had revised anti-drug laws and had continued strong efforts to clean up organized crime. He declared that the government sought to build a solid social foundation for the 21st century, with greater safeguards for women, children, minorities, the elderly and the physically and mentally disadvantaged.<sup>75</sup>

The administrative report presented at this time was rather routine and did not provoke much controversy or extensive comment. Subsequently, delegates broke up into discussion groups to talk about various proposals and amendments. Three hundred and thirty-nine "cases" were submitted for discussion together with 262 political proposals and 77 party-suggested amendments. Business at this time was generally conducted in routine fashion. Many proposals were approved as a matter of course. Others were left for the Central Committee or the Central Standing Committee to finish.

Generally, in terms of the business conducted and the issues debated at the KMT's 15th Party Congress, the two most heated proposals made at the Congress were: (1) a bid for the appointment of Governor James Soong to be a fifth vice-chairman, and (2) a demand that women make up 25 percent of party members and a woman be appointed vice chairman. Sixty-seven delegates put forward a motion to have James Soong made a vice chairman. Liu Tung-lung, one of the delegates who wrote the motion, said it would facilitate party unity. However, KMT Secretary-General Wu refused to comment on the proposal and Chairman Lee quickly parried the idea, saying it was his decision who should be appointed party vice-chairmen.<sup>76</sup> Thus the issue in its immediate form died. But the controversy surrounding the dispute between Lee and Soong did not. Efforts were made by various party leaders to

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74. By putting intimidations and kidnapping in one category, it appeared that kidnapping had declined in number, which was not the case.

75. Keng Bok-sui, "Lien Lauds Cabinet's Success," *China News*, August 26, 1997, p. 2.

76. Lee Defensive After Soong Touted for KMT Vice Chairman," *China Post*, August 26, 1997, p. 1.

dampen the controversy at the Congress, especially given the media's focus on it, but the matter was not resolved and was left for others to deal with after the congress.

Delegate Lee Keng Kuei-fong, a professor at National Chengchi University, proposed that women account for at least 25 percent of party positions and that a woman be made vice chairman. She and her supporters pointed out that the opposition Democratic Progressive Party's charter mandated this and argued that the KMT should have just as many women in the party and as many in important top positions. Her view was supported by former Minister of Interior Yeh Chin-feng, the first female to ever hold that position.<sup>77</sup> The party leadership thus proposed and the Congress adopted a rule requiring 10 percent of female candidates be nominated for public office in the future, but they went no further than this. The party hierarchy's position was that women did not need a quota rule inasmuch as they have done very well in attaining top positions in the party and in the government and, furthermore, the party had done well in promoting female candidates and winning their support in elections, and, finally, passing a mandated quota would be demeaning. Some also pointed out there were already three members of the Central Standing Committee who were women, compared to only one at the 14th Congress.<sup>78</sup>

A less attention-getting proposal submitted that created some controversy was to make county-level party heads elected rather than appointed by the top leadership.<sup>79</sup> This was dealt with quickly and with little heated debate, however, as few delegates were enlivened by the issue. Meanwhile, little was said about party primaries and there was no caucusing of delegates or protests or even heated speeches to oppose the party hierarchy's decision to abandon primaries. Nor was there much debate on the vitally important constitutional amendments, save the scrapping of the provincial government. Some thought that these issues would generate some heated debate at the congress.<sup>80</sup>

Two other matters that did not receive much time or create controversy were minority rights and the economy. Aboriginal

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77. Keng Bok-sui and William Ide, "Whisper of Dissent Marks Congress," *China News*, August 26, 1997, p. 1.

78. Included are Chang Jen-syang, Aboriginal, Legislator; Lin Cheng-chih, Chair of Council for Cultural Affairs; and, Yen Chin-fong, Minister of Interior.

79. *Supra* note 76.

80. The author heard about these issues from delegates and scholars at the time of the congress.



rights had been debated in top circles of the party and proposals were discussed by party members and in the media before the congress. There was but one decision made in this realm: a female aboriginal legislator, Chang Jen-syang, was put on President Lee's list of appointments and won a seat on the Central Standing Committee, a first for the KMT. However, local newspapers did not respond in a positive way to the appointment because of her "mediocre record" in the Legislative Yuan and her lack of "noteworthy achievements."<sup>81</sup> Little other mention was made of minority rights and party leaders noticeably did not make much of this "historic" appointment.

The economy got short shrift compared to past congresses. This may be explained by the fact that opinion polls had recently shown that the public was not as interested in economic growth as it had been in the past and that most felt that economic development was proceeding at about the right pace. In fact, party leaders were trying to look for other issues to help put candidates in office in the coming elections and for this reason did not want to talk a lot about economic development at the congress.

Relations with the People's Republic of China, on the other hand, could not be ignored or played down. On August 26, midway through the 15th Congress, the party's Central Committee received a telegram from the Chinese Communist Party congratulating the KMT on the occasion of the congress while calling for talks "to end the state of cross-strait hostilities."<sup>82</sup> At the same time, however, Beijing rebuffed a proposal for better relations, saying: "Only when Taiwan authorities stop activities to split the motherland. . . can relations improve. . . ."<sup>83</sup> A Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesman also declared that President Lee's reelection to the position of KMT chairman "did not change Taiwan's status as part of China" and urged Taiwan to accept the "one country, two systems" formula for unifying the country.<sup>84</sup>

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81. "KMT Makes History and Selects First Aboriginal Woman CSC Member," *China News*, August 29, 1997, p. 2.

82. "KMT Receives CCP's Congratulations," *China Post*, August 27, 1997, p. 1. It is worthy of note that the message sent by the Chinese Communist Party went to the KMT's Central Committee, not to its chairman Lee Teng-hui, indicating that there remained strong hostility toward Lee.

83. Benjamin Kang Lim, "PRC Throws Cold Water on Taipei's Olive Branch," *China Post*, August 27, 1997, p.1.

84. *Ibid.*

President Lee subsequently addressed the issue together with the party's policy toward Taiwan independence. While not announcing any new policies, Lee spoke in quite emphatic terms. He declared: "We will not, and there is no need, to seek so-called 'independence' since the Republic of China has been a sovereign nation for the past 86 years." He further stated that it is "our . . . goal to seek the reunification of all of China under freedom, democracy and prosperity on the principles of reason, peace and reciprocity." His words seemed to mirror the party's policy of "unification, but not now" or simply maintaining the status quo, which is what opinion surveys indicated is the desire of the population. Lee also had some harsh words, about the "hegemonic mentality of the Chinese communists" while asserting that Taiwan would never accept the "one country, two systems" formula used by the People's Republic of China in incorporating Hong Kong. He likewise vowed to continue Taiwan's pragmatic diplomacy which has been loudly assailed by leaders in Beijing and the subject of controversy at home. Lee stated that Taiwan would "adopt more flexible strategies to build stronger ties. . . and actively (try to) join activities of the United Nations and other world bodies. . . ." <sup>85</sup> Later President Lee called on Beijing to "denounce the 'old-style hegemonistic mentality' and join forces with Taipei to create peace and prosperity for the two sides of the Taiwan Strait." <sup>86</sup>

Toward the end of the Congress, delegates passed a resolution endorsing Lien Chan's administrative report while calling on the government to develop an efficient anti-crime system. The motion praised Lien for his leadership and the administration's successful work in completing constitutional reform, promoting pragmatic diplomacy and engineering stable economic growth. The report likewise lauded the KMT-led government's accomplishments in education, science and technology and modernization. It called on the party to continue to push National Construction Projects and develop Taiwan into an Asia-Pacific regional business hub, heed the public's cry for better social order, and provide government services while eliminating waste from social welfare programs, especially the national health insurance program. The report recommended a step-by-step approach to dealing with China and in the development of cross-strait ties. <sup>87</sup>

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85. Hong Kong, *AFP*, August 15, 1997 cited in *FBIS*, August 26, 1997.

86. "KMT National Congress Issues Declaration," *China News Agency*, August 28, 1997, cited in *FBIS*, August 28, 1997.

87. *China New Agency*, August 27, 1997 cited in *FBIS*, August 27, 1997.

In a KMT official declaration issued toward the end of the congress, the party leadership promised that the party would build clean and efficient government and develop Taiwan into a competitive technology stronghold. The declaration called upon the people to foreswear ideological and regional differences and actively build a democratic society. Party leaders expressed the view that the KMT had democratized the country as the Republic of China's founding father, Sun Yat-sen, wanted and that the congress had forged party unity.<sup>88</sup> Subsequently, at the closing ceremony of the 15th Congress, Chairman Lee repeated some of these tenets, urged the party to accept its historical responsibilities and asserted that the KMT must keep in mind that "sovereignty resides with the people."<sup>89</sup>

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

For the KMT, the main objectives in holding this party congress, as congresses held in the past, were fostering party unity, installing new personnel and deciding new policies. If these are taken as the criteria to decide whether this congress was a success or a failure, certainly one would have to say the results were mixed. Efforts made in democratizing the party and getting ready for the next election campaign; were not successful. On the other hand, the KMT leadership did a credible job in avoiding or finessing issues that might have damaged party unity and morale, which going into this congress were of concern.

The KMT was obviously more unified than it was before, during, and after the 13th and 14th Congresses in terms of the party's top leadership. At the 13th Congress, Lee Teng-hui's leadership of the party was challenged. He was not accepted by many of the old guard. At the 14th, a number of top party officials belonging to a group known as the non-mainstream faction of the party left the KMT to form the New Party. There was not such a serious problem at this congress. Similarly, president and party chairman Lee Teng-hui was not challenged openly nor was his leadership of the party seriously questioned.

Being the incumbent and having already dealt with factionalism in the party (Lee's strongest opponents having already left the KMT), that might have led to the formation of a break-away party, Lee had a distinct advantage. Also, Lee's winning an unprece-

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88. *Ibid.*

89. China News Agency, August 28, 1997, cited in FBIS, August 28, 1997.

dented election to become the first directly elected chief executive in the nation's history was not far distant in the past and was certainly fresh in the minds of most delegates. Finally, Lee's leadership of the party could not be opposed strongly without doing serious damage to the party. All of these things added up to a huge victory in terms of Lee being handily reelected party chairman. This in turn meant that he could pick the vice-chairman without serious challenge as well as the Advisory Council.

When it came to electing the Central Committee and the Central Standing Committee, things were different. Chairman Lee was challenged mildly at least, and in a sense rebuffed, when James Soong garnered the biggest number of delegate votes. Soong got this kind of support because many party delegates were disappointed with Lee's leadership, especially on the issue of downsizing or discarding the provincial government. They were very aware of his feud with Soong and supporting him was an easy, convenient and safe way to send a message. Soong was also a popular figure with the provincial government behind him. Yet, one cannot account for Soong's high vote count simply by the fact that his close supporters rallied support for him.

Many delegates were troubled also by the fact that the KMT had been plastered with the image of a corrupt party that was incapable or unwilling to deal with the crime issue, which was connected in the minds of many to the problem. Soong was seen as a top leader who was not corrupt. Another issue impressed upon delegates was that Lee had ostensibly chosen his successor: Lien Chan. Lien was not as popular among the populace or the party's rank-and-file as Soong. Many delegates, in addition, felt that Lee should consult them about this, or even allow them to vote on the matter of his successor. Many delegates connected this issue with the future of the party, about which doubt was being cast at this time.

The vote tally for Lee's recommended list of candidates for the Central Committee seconds this view. To some extent this can be attributed to the fact that caucus groups had formed and vote trading was endemic. In this context Lee's list did not mean as much as it would have otherwise. Still, there seems to have been a general feeling of resistance to Lee's leadership, or at least his dictating who should be in this elite party core group. The figures are quite telling here. This, however, does not apply to choosing the Central Standing Committee as Chairman Lee has the prerogative (according to the party constitution and there was little impetus to change this) of selecting most of this very elite body and besides, he could control

the rest by arm-twisting and compromise. Also, Lee did not seek a Central Standing Committee too different from the last.

In terms of party morale, the 15th Congress accomplished little to change the rather poor mood among both party delegates and party members. Party infighting over the matter of abolishing the provincial government had dampened the party's spirit. Disagreements about other constitutional changes were compounded by the fact that the public did not comprehend very well what the KMT wanted to do. This complicated matters within the party. Clearly the system was in need of reform; but the reforms were neither understood nor supported by the public to the degree they should have been, given the fact that they were undertaken in response to the urgent need to fix a political system that had been democratized over the past two decades.

One might say, as a consequence, that the party leadership's decisions were mostly correct, but not communicated very well. The hostility between the National Assembly and the Legislative Yuan, in terms of each's power relative to the other and both vis-a-vis the Executive Yuan, spilled over into the party. Cooperation with the DPP in passing the amendments was troubling to many party members. So was the issue of independence. Lee was accused of being authoritarian on the reform of the government; yet, few opined that he wanted another term in office, which would, to his critics, explain his motivation for seeking to put more power in the presidency and the executive branch of government.

President Lee has been walking on both sides of the independence issue. Some would say that his position on independence was both moderate and correct and, according to opinion polls, popular. Still it was divisive and seemed to reflect a lack of policy rather than one that was supported by the majority of either party members or the population. Perhaps the best explanation for much of this is that Taiwan's politics have become very complex in recent years.

The issue of democratizing the party was another area where there was some progress made, but not enough to suit many delegates and party members. Voting has been made more efficient in keeping with the nation's technological progress. It was also made more democratic. However, rules for voting for the Central Standing Committee were unchanged in terms of the franchise among delegates. At the same time, procedural and other rules by which the party conducts its business were not changed significantly to make the party more democratic. Meanwhile there was too little progress made to suit many in terms of the representation of minor-

ity groups, women and the disadvantaged in the top echelons of the party. Chairman Lee did not push for democratization of the party as he had done at times in the past and to the very credible degree he did at the last two congresses. Invidious comparisons were made with the DPP, which was seen as a paragon of progress in this realm.

Some party leaders offered a partial explanation: affirmative action had already gone too far, preferences were a dying thing in the United States and elsewhere, women were making it in politics without special advantages and giving them a pre-determined edge was insulting and divisive. Others, however, said that the party was too preoccupied with various problems and the party's declining popularity was due to its failure to focus on these matters. There was still another "second opinion": the KMT is a multi-ethnic, broadly based party in terms of its support; the other parties are not. Therefore, by its very nature it is a party that advances the causes of various groups and does not need to focus specifically on certain ones. At the close of the congress and even weeks after it was indeed uncertain if the KMT leadership had made a mistake in not pressing affirmative action.

In terms of new personnel, the make-up of the Congress itself as well as its Central Committee, Standing Committee, Advisory Council and vice-chairmen, did not suggest any change. Yet, this can be justified by arguing that it was the will of the members of the party. Was this a problem? Clearly there was no loud outcry about the make-up of any of these groups, except for the complaint that James Soong should have been made a vice-chairman, that women should have been given a quota of seats in the party's decision making organs, and the fact that the parliamentary bodies were not well represented. Whether there will be any fallout from the dissatisfaction about personnel remains to be seen. After the congress was over it did seem to linger as a cause of some concern. The level of education, experience and ethnic make-up of the top organs of the party did not evoke much controversy or criticism.

Changes in party policy were not divisive. Nor can it be said that much was accomplished in this realm. There was not much controversy because there were few policy changes that were terribly meaningful. In addition, most delegates were concerned more about personnel and other matters. Many were preoccupied with getting support for themselves to be voted to the Central Committee or helping a friend get elected. To a sizeable number of delegates, winning on personnel matters meant winning on policy issues

as changes would come in policy depending on who got elected to the Central Committee and the Central Standing Committee.

On the other hand, policy toward China was controversial and demanded attention. It was also seen as a barometer of which way Chairman Lee was leaning and which way the party was going in the future. President and party chairman Lee Teng-hui made several statements on this issue. Generally they were both tough and conciliatory. But they were somewhat ambiguous. This otherwise controversial issue did not become more divisive or heated, probably because of the fact that KMT delegates thought relations with China were getting better, yet did not expect anything major to happen before the congress of the Chinese Communist Party in September. They also were aware of pressure from the United States to pursue more amicable relations with China and did not know how to cope with this or felt that it was best left to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

There was much concern expressed during the congress by delegates and by party leaders, including notably Chairman Lee and Secretary General Wu Poh-hsiung about the party's image, its popularity and about how it would fare in the year-end local elections. Using these as standards for measuring the success of the congress, it could not be given high marks. Clearly the KMT's 15th Congress did not help the party get prepared for the upcoming elections. The results of the November local elections certainly prove this.

On the other hand, the KMT could take credit for manifold accomplishments. It engineered the Taiwan economic miracle in the 1960s and the Taiwan political miracle in the 1980s. Chairman Lee said at the congress that the KMT is the only party in the world that has led a "third wave" democratization and remains in power. There is certainly no reason to conclude that the KMT is soon to become a matter of historical record. It has weathered many storms and crises in the past. It has, almost as a rule, become a better party in the face of adversity. Given the difficulties faced at this congress and the election defeat in November, the KMT will have to employ its ability once again to adapt and prove its resilience.

**APPENDIX:****New KMT Central Standing Committee for the  
15th Congress****Appointed:**

Vincent Siew	Premier
Wu Poh-hsiung	KMT Secretary-General
Fredrick Chien	National Assembly Speaker
Hsu Shui-teh	Examination Yuan President
Liu Sung-fan	Legislative Yuan President
Huang Kun-hui	Secretary-General to the President
Ting Mao-shih	National Security Council Secretary-General
Chiang Chung-ling	National Defense Minister
James Soong	Taiwan Provincial Governor
Koo Chen-fu	Straits Exchange Foundation Chairman
Li Huan	Senior Adviser to the President
Wu Den-yih	Kaohsiung City Mayor
Chen Tien-mao	Kaohsiung City Council Speaker
Liu Ping-wei	Taiwan Provincial Assembly Speaker
Chen Chien-chih	Taipei City Council Speaker
Chang Jen-hsiang	KMT legislator

**Elected:**

Lin Feng-cheng	Minister without Portfolio
P.K. Chiang	Council for Economic Planning and Development Chairman
Yang Ting-yun	Veterans Affairs Commission, Chairman
John Chang	Vice Premier
Wang Jin-pyng	Legislative Yuan Vice Speaker
Lin Cheng-chi	Council for Cultural Affairs, Chairperson
Hsu Li-teh	Senior Advisor to the President
Chao Shou-po	Minister without Portfolio
Kao Chin-yen	Chinese National Federation of Industries Chairman
Hsieh Lung-sheng	National Assembly Vice Speaker
Wang You-theng	ROC General Chamber of Commerce Chairman
Peng Tso-kwei	Council on Agriculture Chairman
Tai Tung-yuan	National Taiwan University Hospital President
James Chu	Overseas Chinese Affairs Commission Chairman
Lee Cheng-chong	Chinese Federation of Labor President
Yeh Chin-feng	Interior Minister
Yao Eng-chi	KMT Policy Coordination Committee Executive Director



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